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THE NEW YORK

# LATIN LEAFLET

Entered at the Post Office in Brooklyn as second-class matter, October 29, 1900

25 Issues

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VOL V

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK. JANUARY 16, 1905

No. 112

## TRUSTEES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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FREDERICK D MOLLENHAUER, Mollenhauer Sugar Refinery  
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### Fourteenth Meeting of the Latin Club

The fourteenth regular meeting of The New York Latin Club is called for Saturday, February 21, at 12 M, in the Hotel St Denis, corner of Broadway and Eleventh Street, New York. Professor H C Elmer, of Cornell University, will address the club. All persons who are interested, whether teachers of Latin or not, are cordially invited to be present. The plan is to serve luncheon at 12 M, promptly, so that there shall be no delay. The address will follow the luncheon, and adjournment will occur about 2 P M, *thus leaving the afternoon still unbroken, for those who attend.* Please send a postal card at once to the Sec'y, Mr A L Hodges, 309 W 101 st, N Y, if you intend to be present, so that we may inform Mr Taylor, the proprietor of the hotel, how many to expect. *Please attend to this at once.*

The price of the luncheon will be 75 cents to members, \$1.00 to others.

Information as to the conditions of membership in The Latin Club can be had at this meeting, or by referring to Nos 3 and 10 of THE LATIN LEAFLET, or by addressing the Secretary

H H BICE, *President*

A L HODGES, *Secretary*

### Thirteenth Meeting of the Latin Club

The thirteenth regular meeting of the Latin Club was held Saturday, December 3, at the Hotel St Denis. The large attendance of over eighty persons certainly seemed to justify the change of quarters. Mr H F Towle presided in the absence of the President, Mr Bice, and Professor John C Rolfe of the University of Pennsylvania addressed the Club on "Extracts from a Teacher's Note-Book". The audience followed his delightful paper with closest attention. Professor Harry Thurston Peck of Columbia University spoke a few words in reply.

The text of Professor Rolfe's address will be published in full in THE LEAFLET.

At the Business Meeting following the address an amendment to the Constitution was adopted, placing the LATIN LEAFLET in the care of an Editorial Committee, consisting of one representative each from the High Schools in Greater New York having a College Preparatory Course.

### Extracts from a Teacher's Note Book

(PROFESSOR ROLFE'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE NEW YORK

LATIN CLUB, December 3, 1904)

#### *In Five Parts, Part I*

I feel much pleased and highly honored as well by the invitation to speak to this Club, in which I have felt a friendly interest since its beginning; and it is as a member of the fraternity of Latin teachers, at large that I wish to address this more select body.

In this country we are all teachers, whether we work in the School, the College, or the University, from him who guides the first steps of the beginner in Latin to him who conducts a seminary in the Graduate School, and it is as teachers that we stand or fall. Some of our young men come back from Germany with the notion that to contribute to the sum of knowledge in one's speciality is the only worthy aim in life, and that teaching is merely a disagreeable but unavoidable incidental duty; but such men speedily modify their view or fall by the wayside. Yet there are still some who say of their fellow workers, in a tone of contemptuous toleration, "Oh, he's a good teacher", implying many things thereby; but the good teacher fills as important a place in the world as the great scholar, even if we were to admit that the two cannot be united in one person.

As a matter of fact, the teacher who is no scholar (reserving the adjective great for the giants of the philological world) does not exist and cannot exist. The pseudo-teachers, whose knowledge does not extend beyond the covers of their text-books; are rapidly becoming a thing of the past, in consequence of a more just appreciation of the needs of the profession and of the qualifications which should be demanded of those who follow it.

When the invitation to address you came to me, I cast about for a subject, or at least a text. I was tempted to try to impress or to entertain you, which I should doubtless have failed to do; but I decided instead to give you a plain talk about some of the problems which are of vital interest to us all, those of the secondary school. They are of

obvious interest to the teachers in those schools, and they are of equal interest and importance to the college teacher, since the superstructure cannot be stronger than its foundations. If I have indulged in personal reminiscences and confessions in a way which would be more seemly in a veteran in the profession, I ask your indulgence, and I beg you to believe that it is not due to egotism or to a desire to pose as a master.

I feel impelled also to apologize for referring so often to my good friend Professor Bennett, though I have more frequently agreed with him than dissented from him. The reason is, that his contributions to this general subject have been so numerous and so valuable, that one can hardly discuss any phase of it without taking sides with or against him—as the pages of the *Latin Leaflet* constantly bear witness.

Some years ago, with the easy confidence of youth, I had the assurance to print some Hints to Teachers of Elementary Latin, which must have caused uncomplimentary things to be said about me by those members of the profession—fortunately not so very many in number—under whose eye they fell. To begin with, I am going to look over these in the light of what wisdom experience has given me, and see how far I should be led to change them, if I had not gained sufficient good sense not to print them at the present time. I shall probably say much that has been said to you before, and better said, and I am sure that I shall say nothing remarkably new; but I can perhaps stimulate discussion and a reconsideration of these ever present problems.

For one thing I emphasized the importance of making a clear distinction between reading and translating Latin, and on this point my convictions have grown stronger than ever, if that were possible. I still believe that students should read every word of their Latin aloud from the very outset, and that the translation should be a distinct process on different lines. It was, I am sure, a confusion of mind as to this matter which led a conscientious teacher, whom I once visited in northern Michigan, to have his class render Caesar into something that I cannot call English, following the exact order of the Latin words; and I fear that there are other cases (though less pronounced) in which the direction not to search for the subject and predicate, but to follow the order of the Latin words, has been transferred from the reading, where it belongs, to the translation.

Of course this subject at once brings us face to face with the much discussed question of the pronunciation of Latin, and here I must confess to some changes, or at least some sinkings of heart. I agree in part with the much debated remarks of Professor Bennett on this subject. It seems to me on the whole a pity that the Roman pronunciation of Latin was introduced into our schools and undergraduate work. But after that I must part company with him. I do not advocate a return to the English pronunciation, and such a thing seems to me quite out of the question. This position may be illogical, but, as a friend of mine used to say, it is a condition and not a theory which confronts us. We have eaten of the tree of knowledge, and we cannot return to our state of blissful ignorance. Knowing as we do the pronunciation of the Romans of the classical period, and having practised it, albeit haltingly, we cannot go

back to the pronunciation which we so hastily cast aside, the pronunciation of which someone has truly said, that it is the only method in use which we know to be absolutely wrong. We have the Roman pronunciation with us with all its difficulties, and I fear we must make the best of it.

Too much knowledge is often an inconvenient thing. I remember that when I was a schoolboy in my second year of Latin study, the edict went forth that our pronunciation be forthwith changed from the English to the Roman method. This great revolution was accomplished without the slightest difficulty in a week or two, simply because we paid no attention at all to quantity. We merely said *-mūs* instead of *-mus*, and *ēst* and *ērat* instead of *est* and *erat*, and we went peacefully on until some of us fell into the hands of Professor Lane at Harvard. But nowadays the teacher of the beginning class knows the importance of quantities, if not the quantities themselves, and *hinc illae lacrimae*. Several things in this connection which I once believed I no longer believe. I do not believe, for instance, that a correct quantitative pronunciation is easy to acquire, or that it can be acquired by the average student by hearing his teacher pronounce with scrupulous exactness. We do not all have keen ears and docile tongues, or unfailing memories, and I will admit, at the risk of discrediting myself, that though I have given an unusual amount of time to the study of Latin quantities, and always try to be accurate in my pronunciation, I not infrequently have to turn to the lexicon, to look up the quantity of a word which I once knew, and which I have never, so far as I know, mispronounced.

I believe that it is an extremely difficult thing to read Latin well and that only a select few have accomplished it. This, like Professor Bennett's similar conviction, is the result of a somewhat unusually wide experience, including—pardon the enumeration—three different summer schools, four greater universities, a small college, and a city high school; and it is so strong that I do not think that any amount of argument can shake it. I *know* it. It is a rare experience for me to hear such words as *periculum* pronounced with a proper sound of the *u* and the *i*, to say nothing of such refinements as *urps* and *optinēō*; and I could give a long list of words which are, in the circles in which I have moved, almost universally mispronounced. Even in the classes of teachers which I have had, the statement that the long and the short vowels differ not only in quantity but in quality has generally been received as new and startling information, and often with no small degree of incredulity. Furthermore, although the grammars are explicit on this point, I have seldom had a class, of teachers or others, to which it was not necessary to explain at length and with many examples the difference between the quantity of vowels and that of syllables. While I find myself unable to agree with Professor Knapp in everything that he said to you about pronunciation, his suggestion that a different nomenclature should be used for the two kinds of quantity seems a good one, and I can suggest nothing better than his "light" and "heavy" syllables. It has also seemed to me that it would be a good thing to have a different way of marking the two kinds of quantity, whenever it is necessary to indicate the quantity of syllables. I was therefore especially interested in the idea of a former pupil of mine, Professor E. D. Wright,

published in the *Latin Leaflet* of Nov. 28, that the same marks be used for the quantity of vowels as for that of syllables, but that they be placed *under* the words instead of *over* them. A more radical change would have the advantage of emphasizing the difference between the two kinds of quantity, and I have actually been asked by teachers of Latin how such a word as *Metellus* should be accented; yet considering the difficulty which there always is in changing established nomenclature, his suggestion is perhaps the most practical one which has as yet been made.

## THE NEW YORK LATIN LEAFLET

EASTERN DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, BROOKLYN  
ERNEST RIESS, De W C High School, Manhattan, Editor  
DAVID H HOLMES, E D High School, Brooklyn, Manager  
Printed by the ROEHR PUBLISHING CO., 35 Myrtle Ave., B'klyn. N. Y.

Published weekly during the school year by The New York Latin Club.

The entire expense of publication is met by the advertisements, so that every penny of every subscription goes into the Scholarship Fund. The subscription price is 25 cents a year. The advertising rates are twenty-five (\$25) dollars an inch, a year.

All communications concerning *The Leaflet* should be addressed to *The Latin Leaflet*, Eastern District High School, Driggs Ave and So 3d St. Brooklyn. Subscriptions to *The Leaflet* should be sent to the same address. Communications requiring answers should contain return postage.

The treasurer is E W Harter, Erasmus Hall High School, Brooklyn, to whom checks made payable to *The Scholarship Fund* should be sent.

The internal purpose of this publication is to provide a Clearing House for secondary classical teachers in New York and vicinity or anywhere else; to afford an opportunity to younger classical scholars anywhere for the publication of their more modest endeavors along the line of original work, which might not otherwise see the light; to stimulate the teaching and quicken the student activity in the classical work in the high schools of Greater New York. The external purpose is to establish one or more College-entrance-scholarships for the most successful graduates from high schools in New York City, to be awarded on a competitive examination. The proceeds over and above expenses will be devoted to a scholarship fund. The labor involved is a labor of love.

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